

## Headless Rite from Σκευη Ευφημεω—drafted in 2022/2023

### Context:

In late September of 2022 our dear Soror Hvezda gave me printed copies of all of the Headless rites being discussed at Magical Bastards, which I promptly misplaced because it was a sweet gesture and/but I definitely wasn't a magician and probably wasn't cool enough to hang out with the folks regularly congregating for book club at the Long Haul.



In October of 2022 I ended up finding those photocopies—along with, if memory serves, a photocopy of Hvezda's missal for Gnostic Mass—just in time to have them serve as my in-flight reading while going to see my moderately transphobic evangelical relatives. While there, my mother and grandmother pointed out a long-dead, lightning-struck, theoretically-cursed tree they'd referred to as The Headless One for the past several decades. *"That's probably a coincidence,"* I thought, because I definitely wasn't a magician.

In November of 2022, I decided I would attempt to initiate myself into Nahemoth<sup>1</sup> but the ritual Hvezda and I had planned was postponed due to

my coming down with the worst sinus infection I'd had during The Plague Years. Lying in bed, partially stoned on cold medication, I decided I would draft my own version of the Headless Rite because I (somehow, mistakenly) believed that was a requirement for all magical initiations. Drafting this took a little under a weekend, and was unexpectedly cathartic because I realized it was the first time I'd written anything *for pleasure* and *purely for myself* in decades. I quickly found myself applying the same editing process I'd done when I was competing in national slam poetry competitions—if speaking the line out loud doesn't make your hair stand on end, **that line isn't done yet.** In my experience as both a pastor and a performer, speaking your Truth (the capital letter is an obligation here) should do that to you, regardless of your volume.<sup>2</sup>

As readers will see in the side-by-side comparison, this Headless Rite is primarily an adaptation of Frater Antichristos's Satanized version, half out of appreciation

<sup>1</sup> Technically my second initiation into this klipa, but the first one done deliberately.

<sup>2</sup> And it's always nice when that Truth lands with your audience by default, but this was not written to please a crowd.

that his unpacks the meaning of each barbarous name, and half out of a desire to borrow insights from a seminary colleague. My own version contains no barbarous names, both because I tend towards not invoking things in languages I have not studied and because vibrating them made me self-conscious enough that it took me out of ritual headspace.<sup>3</sup> I feel that I have retained the spirit(s) of Antichristos's version, if not the identical punch.

In the original version of this text, I aimed to use each element to bring a specific sense into greater attunement with the Rite.<sup>4</sup> These sections were slightly rewritten for the occasion of my debaptism in May 2023, altering the last stanza of each section in order to reflect the repeated "*Hear Me, and Make all Spirits subject unto me...*" of older versions of Headless.<sup>5</sup>

The following Headless Rite is a remix of a remix of a remix, but so is poetry, and so is ritual, and so is history. All of this has happened before and will happen again. The original iteration gets translated, or charred a bit at the bottom, gaining all sorts of interesting transcription errors and artifacts and glitches, and over time it becomes at once unrecognizable from its previous self, fundamentally its own self, and manifestly a patchwork of all of the selves that came before. I am descending into divine bullshit and slamming my bare ass down on a fax machine, and there I find Myself Made Perfect, "*neither human nor god, not me but more me than I am.*"<sup>6</sup>

I am wandering off the map to find myself, and here, as in there, I find monsters.

Boo.

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<sup>3</sup> I do not deny them their poetry and their power now, but in that moment they were not my poetry and power, and *mine* was what was needed given how dormant they had been.

<sup>4</sup> Labeled **OPTION A** in the text below. Given that **OPTION A** involves a repetition of a personal magical name in order to complete a specific rhyme, those using this option would be required to partially rewrite the text.

<sup>5</sup> This is labeled **OPTION B** and equal parts inspiration and blame on Frater Gnostrigrangel, I think.

<sup>6</sup> Some other motherfucker with a penchant for lighting-struck trees.

(Frater Antichristos)

(Σκευη Ευφημεω)

<p>OATH (East): <i>Inverted pentagram</i></p> <p><b>Thee I invoke, the Bornless one</b>  Thee, that didst create the Earth and  the Heavens</p> <p><b>Thee, that didst create the Night and  the Day</b></p> <p><b>Thee, that didst create the Darkness  and the Light</b></p> <p><b>Thou art Myself Made Perfect</b>  <b>Whom no man hath seen at any time</b></p> <p><b>Thou art the truth in matter</b>  <b>Thou are the truth in motion</b></p> <p>Thou hast distinguished between the  just and the unjust</p> <p><b>Thou didst make the female-and-male</b>  <b>Thou didst produce the Seed and the  Fruit</b></p> <p>Thou didst form us to love one  another and to hate one another</p> <p><b>I am Antichristos Akelphalos, Thy  prophet</b>, unto whom Thou didst  commit <b>Thy Mysteries</b>, the secrets of  the Nephilim</p> <p>Thou didst produce the moist and the  dry, and that which nourisheth all Life</p> <p><b>Hear Thou me, for I am the Angel of  Thy True Name</b>, handed down to the  Prophets of Pandemonium</p>	<p>Bornless one, be with me now:  I am Thy prophet, head unbowed—</p> <p>Thou art Myself Made Perfect  Whom no living soul has ever seen  Thou art the dusk, dark, dawn, and day<sup>7</sup>  Female and male and in-between<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Thou art the truth in matter  Thou art the seed, leaf, fruit, and rot<sup>9</sup>  Thou art the truth in motion—  Sharpen my Will, my Way, my thought</p> <p>Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  I am Eufemeo Tem  I am an Angel of Thy True Name  Here I am, now let's begin</p> <p>Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  I am Eufemeo Tem  Serving Life and all its Mystery  Hineni, now let's begin!</p>
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<sup>7</sup> Doubles as a Resh reference and a reference to a Seanan McGuire story collection, and I find alliteration delightful.

<sup>8</sup> This line isn't not for our dear Sibling Helios.

<sup>9</sup> As of this write-up I am about two months from finishing my initial death doula training, and I have some quibbles with the line in the Gnostic Mass that when we invoke "by seed, and root, and stem, and bud, and leaf, and flower, and fruit," we omit the glorious, necessary, awful stage of decay/putrefaction. Returning to earth is not failure but fulfillment—a hill I am willing to die on, trusting that she will swallow me back with tenderness.

AIR (East): Upward triangle with strikethrough

**Hear Me:**

O breathing flowing sun,  
O Sun IAO! O lion serpent sun!  
The beast that whirlest forth, a thunderbolt, begetter of life!  
Thou that flowest, thou that goest!  
Thou Satan-Sun-Hadit that goest without will!  
Thou air, **breath, spirit!** Thou without bound or bond!  
Thou essence, air swift-streaming, elasticity!  
**Thou wanderer, brother of all!**  
**Thou wanderer, lover of all!**  
Thou shining force of breath!  
**Thou lion serpent sun!**  
**Inviolate wisdom, whose word is truth, O Sun IAO,**  
**O beast that whirlest forth,**  
**A thunderbolt, begetter of life**

**Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me:** so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.

O breathing, flowing sun!  
O beast who whirlest forth!  
Thou art the lightning, Thou art thunder  
Thou the storm who gives us birth!

Thou hast wandered as our brother  
Thou hast wandered as our love  
Thou art wisdom, breath, and spirit  
Thou art Satan-Sun above!

Thou art Lion, Thou art Serpent  
Shedding truth where'er You go  
Thou art boundless, bondless essence  
Thou the cycle IAO!<sup>10</sup>

**(OPTION A)**

Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  
I am Eufemeo Tem  
Touch my hands that I might touch you  
Hineni, now let's begin!

**(OPTION B)**

Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered  
Either stay or turn and flee  
But remain here in this temple  
And you're subject unto Me!<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Writing this having not attended Gnostic Mass meant Hvezda had to explain that the syllables here were flexible enough to serve at the pleasure of the previous lines, so she gets partial credit for this verse if she wants it.

<sup>11</sup> Your author feels that it's important to give spirits the opportunity to opt out of being press-ganged into magical workings.

FIRE (South): Upward triangle

I invoke Thee, the terrible and invisible God, who dwellest in the Void Place of the Spirit

Thou Spiritual Sun!  
Satan, thou eye, **thou lust!**  
**Cry aloud! Cry aloud!**  
**Whirl the Wheel, O my Father, O**  
Satan, **O Sun!**  
**Thou, Lightbringer! Thou,**  
**Morningstar!**  
**Silence! Give me thy secret!**  
**Give me suck,** thou phallus, **thou sun!**  
Satan, thou eye, **thou lust!**  
Satan, thou eye, **thou lust!**  
**Thou self-made,** self-willed,  
**self-fulfilled**  
**Without a maker or a master!**

*Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry Land and in the Water: **of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire:** and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.*

*Hail O Star of the Morning  
First to fall with head unbowed  
Thou art self-made, self-fulfilling,  
Unto Thee I cry aloud*

*Whirl the wheel, Unholy Father  
Spin a new vessel up from dust  
Give me Thy secret and Thy silence  
Give me desire, give me lust*

*Thou who brought the light down with Thee  
Sun who stole eternal flame  
Without maker, without master,  
Give me suck and call my name<sup>12</sup>*

(OPTION A)

*Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  
I am Eufemeo Tem  
Open my eyes that I might see you  
Hineni, now let's begin!*

(OPTION B)

*Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered  
Either stay or turn and flee,  
Whirling Air and Rushing Fire  
Are now subject unto Me!*

<sup>12</sup> Your author is a kinky asexual, so this section made for a fun moment of “am I comfortable with the thought of sucking off the devil in exchange for sinister magic?” and immediately going “it feels like a natural telos for my seminary education, actually.”

**WATER (West): Downward triangle**

**I invoke thee, Leviathan, Tanin'Iver,  
sightless serpent, Hear Me!**

**Thou the wheel, the womb, the chasm  
Thou the sea, and thou the serpent  
Babalon, thou woman of whoredom  
Thou, the gates, Our Lady of the  
Understanding of the Ways!  
Hail thou, unstirred! Hail thou,  
unsired!**

Hail sister-bride of Samael, **all and  
none, two and one**, by the power of  
eleven! Thou harlot, twin-sexed!  
**Thou sacred seed!** Thou thunder,  
**perfect mind!** Abode of the light,  
O Lady of the Western Gates, mighty  
thou art!

*Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject  
unto Me: so that every Spirit of the  
Firmament and of the Ether: upon the  
Earth and under the Earth: **on dry Land  
and in the Water:** of Whirling Air, and of  
rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge  
of God may be obedient unto Me.*

*Thou art wheel, and womb, and chasm  
Thou the serpent and the sea  
Thou the gates of understanding  
Open now; flood into me*

*Thou unstirred and Thou unsired  
Sacred seed and perfect mind  
Two and one and all and nothing  
Babalon, O Whore Divine!*

*Thou art sightless in dark water  
Hear me now, Leviathan  
Drown me in my own potential  
Shed this skin, begin again!<sup>13</sup>*

**(OPTION A)**

*Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  
I am Eufemeo Tem  
Touch my mouth that I might taste you  
Hineni, now let's begin!<sup>14</sup>*

**(OPTION B)**

*Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered  
Either stay or turn and flee,  
Whether on dry land or water  
You are subject unto Me!*

<sup>13</sup> This was one of the last stanzas to be finalized, as it sprung into the author's head fully formed while they were about a quarter-mile off shore swimming in the San Francisco Bay. It was committed to waterlogged paper an hour later with shaking hands and frigid salt water still rolling off of them.

<sup>14</sup> Your author was met with instant salty hubris the only time they've tried to perform this version while treading water.

<p>EARTH (North): Downward triangle with strikethrough</p> <p>O Mother, O Truth!  O Mass and Matter!  Hail, Thou that Art!  Thou hollow one!  Thou Goddess of Beauty and Love, whom Satan, beholding, desireth!  Male-female, he desires thee.  Male-female, thou desireth him!</p> <p>Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: <b>upon the Earth and under the Earth:</b> on dry Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.</p>	<p><i>Thou art Beauty rendered weapon  Satan cannot help but kneel<sup>15</sup>  Thou art Lust and Love Requited  Thou art Dark Earth that can heal<sup>16</sup></i></p> <p><i>Thou art Mass and Thou art Matter<sup>17</sup>  Thou Desire's beating heart  Transcend ego, form, and gender  Hail to Thee, O Thou that Art!</i></p> <p><i>Give me love of hollow places  Where the truth rings loud and clear  Make me unafraid of silence  And within it what I hear<sup>18</sup></i></p> <p><b>(OPTION A)</b>  <i>Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  I am Eufemeo Tem  Put your scent out; I will track it<sup>19</sup>  Hineni, now let's begin!</i></p> <p><b>(OPTION B)</b>  <i>Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered  Either stay or turn and flee  Those upon the Earth and und'r it  Are now subject unto Me</i></p>
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<sup>15</sup> More accurately “Lucifer is glad to kneel,” if we’re going off the model of Satan being the union of Eisheth Zenunim and Lucifer.

<sup>16</sup> I felt Na’amah needed more explicit shoutouts given the original occasion for this draft.

<sup>17</sup> Occasionally “Thou art Mass and Thou art Mother,” or “Thou art Mother, Thou art Matter.”

<sup>18</sup> In my experience interesting things occasionally happen if I pause after this verse. Sometimes what you hear in the silence is a stunning revelation you carry with you for months, sometimes it’s just a car alarm going off nearby.

<sup>19</sup> Surprisingly difficult to convey the sentiment “I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO SMELL THE ENTITIES FOR THE SAKE OF SENSUAL PARITY” in a way that doesn’t sound like a serial killer.

SPIRIT BELOW (East/Up): *The Earth*  
(circle, cross)

**Hear me, forces of Hell!**

Male-female spirit! Male-female sire!  
Ye that are Gods, going forth, uttering  
AUMGN

Identical point!

**Lilith, Samael, Baphomet!**

O Beast with two backs, hail!

**This is the Lord of the Gods**

This is the Lord of the Universe

**This is He Whom the Winds Fear**

This is He, Who having made **Voice by His Commandment**, is Lord of All Things

*Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.*

*I call the Lord of Gods  
Who Caused the Winds to Fear  
O One Whose Voice is a Commandment  
Cause Thy Kindred to appear:*

*Hail to Thee, O Wild Lilith,  
Hear me now, forces of Hell  
I will greet Thee at the crossroad  
Be my teacher, Samael!<sup>20</sup>*

*As above be so below  
O balance me, dear Baphomet  
Hail to all my guides and guardians  
Who I've not encountered yet!<sup>21</sup>*

**(OPTION A)**

*Hear me now, O spirits gathered—  
I am Eufemeo Tem  
Touch my ears that I might listen  
Hineni, now let's begin!*

**(OPTION A)**

*Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered  
Either stay or turn and flee  
But those of Firmament and Ether  
Are now subject unto Me*

<sup>20</sup> About half the time I do this I end up knocking on the floor twice for each name. I don't want to compel anyone to come to me against their will, but I want them to know they are welcome to attend.

<sup>21</sup> Half needing a rhyme for *Baphomet*, half an acknowledgement that magical practice is a gradual unfurling. I'm in love with my future and can't wait to meet them.

<p><b>SPIRIT ABOVE (East/Down):</b>  <i>The Sun (circle, dot)</i></p> <p>Hear me, Powers of Air and <b>Sons of Morning! Indwelling sun of my soul</b>      Thou fire, Thou Morningstar!      Indwelling God of my soul      O fire, O Morningstar!      Sun lion serpent, hail! Hail thou great wild beast!      Breath of my soul, breath of my angel!      Lust of my soul, lust of my angel!  <b>Thou knowing good and evil!</b>      Ho for the cup of Babalon!  <b>Pour thyself into my soul!</b>      The eye! Satan, my love, O lust of the goat!  <b>Mine angel, mine initiator, thou one with me,</b> O Morningstar! My Lord, my life, my secret self!  <b>Come forth, hidden light!</b>  <b>Devour me! Thou dost devour me!</b>  <b>There is no I, only thou, there is no I, only thou</b>  <b>there is no I, only thou</b>  <b>Arise in me, I will thee, I behold thee</b>      Leap up, O Earth      O Bornless One! Behold!      The splashing seeds of immortality!</p> <p><i>Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: <b>and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.</b></i></p>	<p><b>(OPTION A)</b></p> <p><i>See me now, O Sons of Morning      Dawn is breaking in my heart      Call the light from deep within me      Shape my science into art</i></p> <p><i>Devour me as I behold Thee      Rise in me, I'm ready now—      Angel and Initiator:      There is no I, only Thou—</i></p> <p><i>Thou who knowest good and evil      Pour thyself into this soul      Eufemeo isn't here now      But they are home...and they are whole</i></p> <p><b>(OPTION B)<sup>22</sup></b></p> <p><i>See me now, Indwelling Sunlight      Dawn is breaking in my heart      Call a spark up from within me      Shape my science into art</i></p> <p><i>Devour me as I behold Thee      Rise in me, I'm ready now—      Angel and Initiator:      There is no I, only Thou—</i></p> <p><i>Thou who knowest good and evil      Pour thyself into this soul      Knit us back together briefly      We are home and we are whole<sup>23</sup></i></p> <p><i>Hear Me now, O Spirits gathered      Either stay or turn and flee      But every Spell and Scourge of God      Is now obedient to Me</i></p>
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<sup>22</sup> This section was originally the hardest to write because so much of the language is used elsewhere in the ritual. There was a substantial rewrite between November and May, purely from doing the Rite regularly and developing more of a working relationship with Something Both More Than Me And Not Me.

<sup>23</sup> These two lines courtesy of the aforementioned More Than Me And Not Me.

<p><b>THE ATTAINMENT (East): Personal sigil</b></p>	
<p><b>I am He! The Bornless Spirit, having sight in the feet Strong, and the immortal Fire!</b></p> <p>I am He, the Truth! I am he, who hate that evil should be wrought in the world! I am He that lightningeth <b>and thundereth!</b> I am He, from whom is the Shower of Life! <b>I am He whose mouth flameth!</b> I am He, the Begetter and Manifester! I am He, the Lightbringer!</p> <p>I am He, the Lord of this world.</p> <p><b>"The Heart Girt With a Serpent" is my name!</b></p>	<p>Hear me now, O human witness— I am He whose breath is flame “Heart Encircled With a Serpent” Should you need to speak my name</p> <p><i>I am He, Headless and Bornless Sight in feet I am not blind I am strong, immortal Fire I'm the thunder in their mind</i></p> <p><i>They are a single shoreline second They are a brief perfection I am the wave that shapes each moment I am their resurrection</i></p>
<p><b>Come Thou forth, and follow Me:</b> and make all Spirits subject unto Me so that every Spirit of the Firmament, and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry land, or in the Water: of whirling Air or of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God, may be obedient unto me!</p>	<p><i>And I have always been here And I will never, ever leave That is a promise and a threat There is much more yet to perceive<sup>24</sup></i></p>
<p>CLOSING: Inverted cross</p> <p><b>IAO, SABAO, SHEMHAMFORASH! Such are the words!</b></p>	<p><b>(OPTION A)</b></p> <p>Hear me now, O human witness— When you step down into Night You are one Star out of many And the sum of all their light</p> <p><i>Coax your flame up from the ashes Cut your diamond Self from stone Answer to the god within you—</i></p>

<sup>24</sup> Sometimes you have writer's block and yell to an empty room that you're tired and you're going to bed and if they want this ritual written on time they're going to have to step up, and then you wake from a deep sleep and frantically write eight lines down on scratch paper and only after you finish do you realize that you are not left-handed, but who you are in this moment is atypically blurry.

I understand this life as one, individual, and eternal. I am a wave that rolls back to the ocean. And I have been made to understand the counterpart I am invoking as both a force that remembers the configuration of all of these water molecules and one with sufficient will to reunite them when they scatter. They were with me before I was born. They'll be present at my death. (I have been made to understand that this is, in fact, the only time I'm going to be able to see their face.) Life is being on the opposite side of a veil from them; the practice of magic allows us to more easily bother the other at home.

**Nema!**

You need never walk alone.

**(OPTION B)**

*Hear Me now, O spirits gathered  
Come thou forth out of the night,  
I am one Star out of many  
But the sum of all their light*

*Hear me now, O all assembled  
Stardust, ash, and breath, and bone  
Listen for the god within you  
You need never walk alone*

Such are the words in closing:

IO IAO. IAO SABAO.  
O SHEMHAMFORASH.  
NEMA, TO THE END.  
NEMA, TO THE BEGINNING.  
AND NEMA ONCE AGAIN.  
AND NEMA ONCE AGAIN.  
NEMA. NEMA. NEMA.